

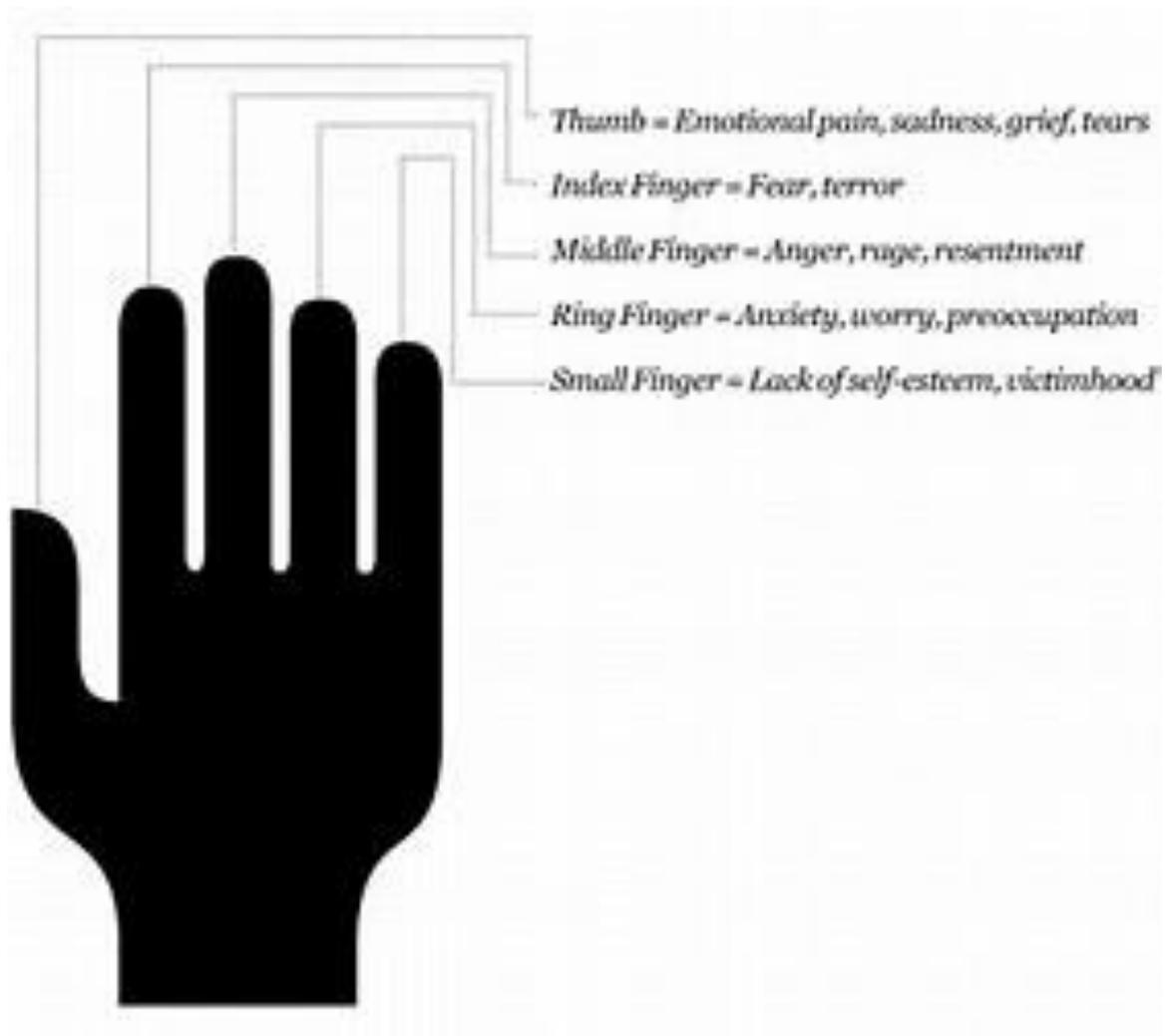
The Holding Touch.....

A Story Bags Mum came today when we were at Blenheim Grange distributing free food for families, which has been donated by The Bakery and Tesco in Watton and also Foodbank. The Mum said how hard it was, as we usually give each other hugs and declared how she and her son had missed Story Bags. When we can regather, how much the children will have grown and the babies will be on their feet!

It's vital that we can be together, face to face, as soon as possible, to share friendship and the all important, appropriate touch, which Elaine was referring to in her Reflection last week. During a recent Sunday Service, we were reminded by Charlie and Revd Kyla, of Psalm 139 and how the Creator knit us together in our mother's wombs. Sometimes, however, a traumatic birth experience can unbelievably leave its mark on both mother and baby.

Back in 2017, following my 3-month Sabbatical, two Quiet Days were offered in the Vicarage garden. There was also a Workshop in 2019, when we learnt about Capacitar's simple, healing practices, to help find peace of mind and inner strength. The word 'Capacitar' means to empower & encourage.

Capacitar teaches Fingerholds, which are used in traumatised communities around the world, by any age group. We can all massage a thumb or finger and allow God's healing and blessing in our quiet reflection to change how we're feeling.



When our Grandchildren come for a holiday with us on Thursday with their parents, I will be indulging in lots of hugs and holds, having only been able to share at a distance the uncertainties which have been growing for them, as for many others, during this time of the Pandemic. I hope I can teach my Grandchildren some fingerholding techniques to help them with their emotions.

In Westfield Infants School they use the Paths Programme.....

PATHS® (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)

www.episcenter.psu.edu/sites/default/files/PATHS_FAQs_4.25.17.pdf

During research studies, the **PATHS® program** has been shown to improve protective factors such self control, **understanding** and recognition of emotions, ability to tolerate frustration, more efficient conflict- resolution strategies, and thinking and planning skills.

In each classroom there is explanation and examples of all kinds of feelings, with pictures of happy or sad or angry or confused faces. Children are encouraged to identify during the day which is the facial expression, which most closely resembles how they are feeling and why, as well also noting those of others. As hugging and other similar contact is discouraged, awareness of how they themselves and others are feeling is very important for children who find it difficult to control emotions or to show them or to be aware of others.



1 Peter 5: 7 states “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” and 1 John 5: 14 “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have we asked of him”.

When this pandemic is over, we will be able to hold each other again. Yet, whether we clasp the hands of others, or our own hands, when we put our hands in those of God in prayer, he can take ours and strengthen us. God is our healer and comforter who, through the Holy Spirit empowers, encourages, guides and leads. He can show us how to use our touch for good for each other, to comfort, to congratulate, to greet, to support, to show affection and, wherever we are, to be in prayer and at peace with Him.